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May 2021

### John Kean to Susan Kean, January 27-February 7, 1788

John Kean

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#### Recommended Citation

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Jan<sup>y</sup> 27<sup>th</sup> 1788.

I wrote my love a few days ago - it was meant as a consolation in her great affliction - but I fear sorrow sat to near my own heart to administer any relief to hers - anxiety, fell fiend preys upon my spirits, & not a letter - a single word to calm my perturbed spirits - the state of suspense is tremendous - but yet hope that soother of the soul, can still interpose and flatter us with imagined good -

Jan<sup>y</sup> 30<sup>th</sup>

Yet no letters and the papers announce the arrival of a vessel from New York - what am I to think - be calm my soul & resigned to your fate - the hand of the great first cause is as powerful to save as to destroy - the ordinary mode of conveyance from Charleston is interrupted - the winds are adverse - the weather is exceedingly boisterous & cold - perhaps my dear Susans letters are on board this packet - I will be patient - I have not been so well since this harsh cold spell - I have spit a little blood and have had a degree of pain in my Chest - good night my love - take care of yourself and remember how much you owe to God & the world -



Feb<sup>y</sup> 3<sup>d</sup>

The long looked for packet is at length arrived and brings me my dearest Susans letter - it has been a great relief to me & altho it confirms the melancholy tidings - yet it has greatly calmed my spirits - yes my Susan lives to thank the omnipotent for all his mercies - to prove her fortitude & resignation - put your confidence in the most high and he will not deceive you - Dear babe! thou charming representative of our dear departed sister - to thee I will translate the affection I bore thy mother and my Susan shall be unto thee all that thy own mother would have been - if it pleases God to give her health & strength she will nourish thee from her dear bosom - but yet the moments of my anxiety are not at an end, nor can they end until I hear from my beloved in March - I hope you will strengthen your mind by every argument that your sound reason and good sense can suggest & not destroy yourself by an apprehension which reflects upon the justice of the Almighty & arraigns his goodness & mercy -

I would write Otto & your father but what can I say to them that their own good sense will not have already suggested - ~~to them~~ - it is from this source & the lenient hand of time, that they must expect & will receive consolation -



Thursday the 7<sup>th</sup> February 1788 -

This day I expect creates my happiness or misery and delivers my Susan from all her fears & apprehensions - confers on her the revered name of mother - it is an awful crisis - my soul & body confesses this truth - the anxiety of my mind is almost too much for me - I petition & sollicit heaven incessantly for your ease & safety - willingly very willingly will I forego all the satisfaction that can arise from the name of father - rather than thou my Susan should be in any danger - I am indeed almost become an idolater - I worship Death - from the same principle as the indians do the devil - fear - I no longer give him those epithets by which he is generally designated - gloomy inexorable, unfeeling tyrant - but deprecate his wrath by submission & implore his forbearance from consideration of virtue & humanity - I with great humility represent to him that there are many who pray for his interposition, the evils of whose lives are so great that they would most willingly attend him & many others who are of so little consequence that they might go hence & not be missed - why then Oh Death! wilt thou interfere between hearts strictly united & deprive the world of such rare & distinguished virtues as were



& are possessed by Eliza & my beloved - spare me  
her good Death & heap not calamity on calamity nor  
deprive the world of such an example of a truly  
virtuous & affectionate wife as is my Susan -

Take care of yourself my love - do not  
let any flattery of good health induce you to ad-  
- venture yourself into a situation any ways  
critical - avoid cold & damp - no washing or  
wiping up of rooms - sacrifice cleanliness to health  
for a due time & for ever if necessary -

Your letter got to Charleston the 21<sup>st</sup> Jan<sup>y</sup>  
& I never received it until the 3<sup>d</sup> February - it  
was a cruel delay -

The intercourse will now be more open as  
the Vessels for Philadelphia will now begin to go -  
my Susan will have an opportunity of hearing  
the oftner from me -

Give my love to all the family -

I shall make you & your little one a present  
of 3000 Acres of land & will have it settled for you  
as fast as I can & the Georgia disturbances will  
let me -

Adieu my Love

Your affectionate husband

John Fran